

THE HEART OF JESUS

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A SERMON
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*"I am meek and lowly in heart."
Matthew 11:29.*

WE have preached upon the whole of this passage several times before, therefore we do not intend to speak upon it in its full teaching, or enter upon its general run and context. But we select for our meditation this one expression, which has greater depth in it than we shall be able to fully explore—"I am meek and lowly in heart."

I have felt very grateful to God for the mercy of the past week during which the ministers educated in our College have been gathered together as a devout convocation and have enjoyed a flood-tide of the divine blessing. Unusually great and special joy has filled my soul, and therefore, I have asked myself, "What can I do to glorify the Lord my God who has been so gracious to me, and has so prospered the work committed to me and my brethren?" The answer which my heart gave was this—"Endeavor to bring sinners to Jesus; nothing is sweeter to Him than that, for He loves the sons of men." Then I said to myself, "But how can I bring sinners to Christ? What means will the Holy Spirit be likely to use for that purpose?" And the answer came, "If you would preach sinners to Christ, you must preach Christ to sinners, for nothing so attracts the hearts of men as Jesus Himself." The best argument to bring sinners to believe in Jesus is Jesus. Has He not said, "I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me?" Then I said, "But what shall I preach concerning Jesus?" And my soul replied, "Preach the loving heart of Jesus; go to the center of the subject, and set forth His very soul, His inmost self, and then it may be that the heart of Jesus will draw the hearts of men."

Now, it is very remarkable that the only passage in the whole New Testament in which the heart of Jesus is distinctly mentioned is the one before us. Of course there are passages in which His heart is intended, as for instance when the soldier, with a spear, pierced His side, but this passage is unique as to the actual mentioning of the *kardia* or heart of Jesus by a distinct word. There are several passages in the Old Testament which refer to our divine Lord, such as—"Reproach has broken My heart, and I am full of heaviness." And that notable one, in the twenty-second Psalm, "My heart is like wax, it has melted within Me." But in the New Testament this is the only passage which speaks of the heart of Jesus Christ, and therefore we will weigh it with all the more care. Without further preface we shall have two things carefully to do. First, *to consider the description here given of the heart of Jesus*; and then, secondly, we will *labor to obey the exhortations which are connected with this description*. For both these matters we shall need the rich assistance of the Holy Spirit, and I pray that it may be vouchsafed, since it is the Spirit's office to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us. We may confidently expect that He will shine upon so choice a subject as the sacred heart of our loving Lord.

I. LET US MEDITATE UPON THE DESCRIPTION OF THE HEART OF THE LORD JESUS, which is presented to us in the text. It consists of two adjectives: "I am *meek* and *lowly* in heart." There is no pomp or display in either of the qualities mentioned; they both belong to the gentle order of virtues, and are but little esteemed among the princes of this world and their warriors.

The first is the word, "meek". It is used in the New Testament in the third beatitude—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." And Peter uses it, when speaking of, "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." Of our Lord it is also said—"Behold your King comes to you, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." The original word has the significations of "mild, gentle, soft, and meek." Such is the heart of Christ. And you will observe that Jesus Christ says this concerning Him-

self—"I am meek in heart." There are points of character which a man could not fitly declare concerning himself, or it might savor of self-praise. But the virtue of meekness was of old so little esteemed, that a man might claim it without being suspected of seeking approval. It is remarkable that Moses, also, has recorded in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Numbers the fact that he was remarkable for meekness: "Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men that were upon the face of the earth." It has been thought by some that the verse must be an interjected one, and could not have been written by Moses. But I strongly object to the supposition of interjections, although that method of removing difficulties is now so very fashionable in certain quarters, and I think we ought never to fall back upon that suggestion unless we are absolutely forced to do so. I believe that Moses, guided by infallible inspiration, wrote that description of himself for our example, and was utterly free from any vainglory in so doing, just as our blessed Lord, in all lowliness, here spoke concerning Himself, and said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Meekness seeks not its own; and when it asserts itself, it is always with an eye to the benefit of others; therefore none can bid it be silent. For a man to boast before his adversaries, "I am wise," or, "I am strong," would be vainglory, but to say to them, "I am meek," would be not boasting, but a sacred argument for peace—a plea for gentleness and quiet. Our Savior, who never sought the praise of man, says of Himself, "I am meek," because He desired to remove the fears of those who trembled to approach Him, and would win the allegiance of those who feared to become His followers, lest His service should prove too severe. He, in effect cried, "Come to Me, you offending men, you who feel your unworthiness, you who think that your transgressions may provoke My anger; come to Me, for I am meek." It would be no pride for a man to say, "I am strong," if he would thereby induce a drowning person to trust him for the saving of his life. Neither would it be wrong for a person to say, as a physician practically says, "I am wise in medicine," in order to lead a dying person to take the medicine which he felt sure would heal him. We may and must assert ourselves, and avow those qualities which are truly ours, if by doing so a great benefit can be bestowed upon others. And Jesus, therefore says, "I am meek," because this gentle attribute would silence fear, and lead the timid to approach Him, and learn of Him.

The other adjective is, "lowly." "I am meek and lowly in heart." This is the word which is translated in the memorable song of the Virgin Mary, "low degree." "He has put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted them of low degree." It is also used in Romans, where Paul says, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." It is also used in Second Corinthians, seventh chapter and sixth verse, where it is rendered differently: "God that comforts those that are cast down," while in the epistle of James it is translated, "humble." "He resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble," and it is so rendered in the first epistle of Peter. If you turn to any Greek lexicon you will find that the word does not signify merely what the Scriptures translate it by, but since the Greeks were a war-like people, a proud people, an intimidating people, and thought it foul scorn to patiently endure an insult, the word which we translate by, "lowliness," they would understand to mean, "baseness, or meanness." The word to the heathen Greeks meant, "Keeping near the ground, vile, contemptible"—and our Savior has deigned to describe His own heart by a word which unregenerate men would thus misinterpret. Even now a man who will not fight, but has learned to suffer wrong without resenting it, is thought by certain people to be destitute of spirit, and worthy of contempt. That lowly grace which the world calls base and mean-spirited, Jesus claims as being His own peculiar quality. He is not lofty, ambitious, proud, and haughty. He dwelt with the humble and contrite; He associated with men of low estate, such as the ungodly would look down upon as utterly beneath regard. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. When He was reviled, He reviled not again. He did not strive, nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets; a bruised reed He did not break, and the smoking flax He did not quench. Thus have we weighed the words themselves.

Now, this description of the heart of Christ may be understood as opposed, first, to quickness or anger. Meek men bear many provocations. Some men take fire at a single spark, if you do but even seem to pay them disrespect, they are indignant in a moment. But Christ says, "I am meek; I can pardon your ingratitude and disrespect, yes, and forgive your profanity, your blasphemy, your insult, your scorn, your enmity, your malice, for I am meek." Even when put to a cruel death He muttered no curse and threatened no revenge. "Slow to anger and plenteous in mercy," like His Father, is the Son of the Highest.

Meekness and lowliness are also opposed to haughtiness of spirit. Jesus did not seek the empty glories of pomp and state, neither did He desire honor from men. He did not speak proudly to those around Him and domineer over them, or exercise lordship over them as the princes of the gentiles do. He was affable, easily to be reached, and ready to be entreated. The poor and the sick could readily move His heart to pity, and His hand to help. He was called the friend of publicans and sinners, and of Him it was said, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." As a teacher Jesus was meek and lowly in heart and therein was the very opposite of the scribes. If you saw a Pharisee in Christ's day, you would have seen the incarnation of pride; he professed, by his very name, to be a select being, and in dress, manner and conversation, he set himself up to be some great one. He would not come to the windward of a sinner if he could help it—he passed him in the street as though he were a dog. But Christ was gentle and willing to associate with the vilest of the vile, and the lowest of the low, for He was "lowly in heart."

The expression of the text is also opposed to that pretended meekness and mock lowliness which has at times imposed upon the world. It is true our Savior was meek and lowly in appearance, for even in His greatest pomp He rode upon a colt, the foal of an ass, and not upon a horse which indicated state. He was always lowly in manner and deportment, and though He could flame and flash with sacred boldness, and speak words that burn in His holy indignation against hypocrisy, yet when He uttered the glad message of the gospel, He was very gentle, even as a nurse with her child. Yet the meekness and lowliness of Christ were not things of manner and of word alone: He was so in His heart. He was not of those who fake humility to secure power; of whom an almost forgotten poet said—

*"There are some that use
Humility to serve their pride, and seem
Humble upon their way, to be prouder
At their wish'd journey's end."*

It is said of Thomas A'Becket that he affected the greatest lowliness and humility, and for this reason he washed the feet of 13 beggars every morning; but yet he was arrogance itself, and lorded it over his king. He was the proudest of the proud, though he pretended to be the humblest of the humble. Many men have concealed inordinate pride beneath a crouching manner, mimicking humility while harboring arrogance. While their spirit has been full of imperial despotism, they have pretended to be the friends of the people, and have talked like the most truthful demagogue. Not so our truthful Master. He was "meek and lowly *in heart*." To Him association with the poor and sinful was no affectation of condescension; He was already on their level in intense sympathy with their sorrows. His heart was with the common people. He did not force Himself down from a natural haughtiness to a constrained contact with the lowly, but He became a real friend of sinners, and a willing companion of the needy. He rejoiced in spirit when He said, "Father, I thank You that You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes." His heart was meek and lowly; it was His very nature to be clear of anger and pride, passion and enmity. Thus from its opposites we see more clearly the meaning of our text.

It will further help us if we consider that the words employed here include, first, a readiness on the part of Christ to pardon all past offenses. "Come unto Me," He says, "you sinners, for however much you may have offended in the past, I am meek, and easily to be entreated. I am ready to forgive, to forget, and cast behind My back all your provocations. I do not say this to cajole you; My very heart says it, for My heart is full of tenderness and compassion for you. I have borne much from you, and can bear still more. I will be mindful of your infirmities, and forgetful of your transgressions, and I will not be so grieved by your rebellions as to cast you out if you come to Me." Jesus is long-suffering, compassionate, and ready to forgive. Like His Father He passes by transgression, iniquity, and sin because He delights in mercy.

But the words include also a willingness to endure yet further offenses. "I am meek" means, "Not only do I forget the past, but I am ready to bear with you, still, though you should still offend Me; though you should still be ungrateful; though you should treat Me as I ought not to be treated, and give unkindness for My love, I will endure it all. Come to Me although you cannot hope that your future character will be perfect; I will help you to struggle into holiness, and be patient with your failures. If you come to Me, I am prepared to forgive you unto seventy times seven, yes, as often as you shall err, so

often will I restore you, and as frequently as you shall grieve Me, as frequently will I forgive you. If you take My yoke, I will not be angry if sometimes it appears heavy to you; if you learn of Me, I will not be vexed if you prove but dull scholars. I am meek in heart, ready to forgive the past, and willing to bear with you in the present and in the future.” Beloved brethren, what a heart Jesus has to receive sinners in this divine manner!

And then as to the second word, “I am lowly in heart,” that means, “I am willing to receive the lowest and the poorest among you; the most obscure, despised, and ignorant, I welcome to My salvation. O you laboring and heavy-laden ones, I shall not feel, in your coming to Me, that you are presuming, and that your company is a dishonor to Me. I shall not say to you, ‘Get you gone, I have chosen the company of kings and princes, of philosophers and divines, of the wealthy and the witty.’” No, Jesus covets not the so-called aristocracy, but seeks after men of all ranks. The poor have the gospel preached to them. Some of His professed ministers have looked down upon the toiling masses, but their Master said, “Come unto Me all you that labor.” Stand not back, you people, because you are of low estate, for Jesus is of a lowly heart. Come to Him, you who are like the Soodras, of whom the Brahmins say that they came from God’s foot, while the Brahmins came from the head of deity: Jesus thinks not so. Come to Him, you who are the pariahs of society, outcasts, and men of no caste at all, for Jesus, also, was rejected by His brethren. You, whom men despise, come to Him who was despised of men. You homeless, come to Him who had not where to lay His head. You needy, come to Him who hungered and thirsted. Yes, you lost, draw near to the Son of man, who is come to seek and to save that which was lost, for “He is lowly in heart.”

His lowliness means this, also, that as He is willing to receive the lowest so He is willing to do the very lowest and most menial service for those who come to Him: willing to bear their burdens, willing to wash their feet, willing to purge them from their sins in His own blood. Jesus waits to be gracious, and delights to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. For sinners He has performed feats of lowly love, for He has borne their sin and their shame, their iniquities and their sicknesses. He willingly stooped to the lowest position to save the lowest of men. You see I am talking very calmly and in a quiet manner, but my heart glows within me while I am telling you these things about my own dear Lord and Master, whose shoe lace I am not worthy to untie. He has, in these two words, as with two masterly strokes of the pencil, given us a perfect picture of His dear, gentle, face; no, not of His face, but of His inmost heart. How I wonder that we are not all in love with Him. He is “Meek and lowly in heart!” These are two beauties, which to sinners’ eyes, when sinners know themselves, are the loveliest and fascinating attributes, such as charm their fears, and chain their hearts. He that has eyes to see let him look here, and looking, let him love—

*“Jesus who gave Himself to us,
Upon the cross to die,
Unfolds to us His sacred heart.
O, to that heart draw near!
You hear how kindly He invites,
You hear His words so blest—
All you who labor come to Me,
And I will give you rest.”*

To set forth these words a little more, I beg you to remember that they are enhanced in value if we reflect who it is that speaks them of Himself. Remember it is the Lord God, the Son of the Highest, who says, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” As I listened to this text, at first it spoke to me with a still small voice, and made me very glad. Then, like Moses at the bush, I drew near unto it; but, lest I should be too bold and grow irreverent, it changed its tone, and I heard peal upon peal of thunder issuing from it, as I listened to the words, “*I am.*” Hear you not in those words the incommunicable name, JAH, Jehovah, the Self-existent One? Yet, as I listened awe-struck to that thunder’s crash, and feared lest it might forbade a tempest, and precede destruction, I felt the soft drops of eternal mercy fall upon my brow, and heard, again, the gentle voice of the Mediator saying, “*Meek and lowly in heart.*” Jehovah Jesus is gentle, tender, and condescending. What a divine blending of glory and grace! Oh, it is marvelous! Words

cannot set it forth! Omnipotent, yet lowly! Eternal God, yet a patient sufferer! He is King of kings, and Lord of lords, yet “meek and lowly in heart!”

Remember well, that He who spoke these words is He who said in the twenty-seventh verse, “All things are delivered unto Me of My Father.” Yes, He is possessor of all things, and yet says, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” You know, brethren, it is difficult to be a man of power, and yet to be meek; to be a king, and to order things after your own will, and yet to be lowly; to be master of all, and to suffer with patience the scoffs and reproaches of those who are not worthy to be put among the dogs of your flock. To have all things delivered to Him by God, and yet He was so meek as to endure all manner of contradiction of sinners against Himself. He allowed sinners to spit in His face, to pluck His hair, and scourge Him cruelly—this is matchless and unparalleled meekness, and lowliness of heart! Yet such was Jesus Christ—as God Almighty and as man most lowly. Having an infinite mediatorial power, with all things delivered to Him, yet our Redeemer was “meek and lowly in heart.”

And recollect one thing else. He has told us elsewhere that, “The Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son.” If it were your business and mine, as it is not, to exercise judgment, and to be the universal censors, I guarantee you it would be a superlative difficulty to be able to retain a meek and lowly heart. But Jesus Christ is universal Judge, His eyes, like flames of fire, discern between the precious and the vile, burning up the stubble, and purifying the gold. And yet, though ruler of all mankind, and soon to come upon His throne to judge both angels and men, He could say in the days of His flesh, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” These are very wonderful words. I do not know whether you catch the contrast. If you do not, it is my fault in not being able to put it, for it is surpassingly striking; a divine being, superlative in power, and commissioned to judge mankind, and yet, for all that, “meek and lowly in heart.”

It is most possible that the very reason of His meekness and lowliness may lie somewhere in His glorious greatness, though it may seem a paradox, for who are the meekest in the world but those who are truly strong? You shall pass down the street and a yelping dog will bark at you, but yonder powerful pit-bull takes no note of you. A cackling goose will follow you upon the village green, while the powerful ox feeds on in peace. Real strength is the backbone of meekness. The angry are weak, the patient are strong. The infinite heart of Jesus is a meek heart partly because it is infinite. And I have noticed too, that really great men are lowly men, at any rate, they are only great as far as they are lowly. When a man is fond of dignity, pomp and show, he is a second-rate man, and an essentially little man. Those who stick out for minute points of honor and respect are the very small men. The man who must have all his titles written after his name shows that he feels he needs them. The more eminent a man becomes, the plainer his name becomes in men’s mouths. The greatest men among us in the state are seldom or never called even by their full names and honors, but are known by the shortest designations. The greater a man is the less state he cares for. Look into the army. Every petty officer is decorated to the fullest, but the commander-in-chief is plainly dressed, and scarcely wears an ornament at all, simply because he is great. The entire world over, the man who wants to be thought great is essentially little, and he, who for the good of others is ready for any service, has the elements of greatness in his character. The Lord Jesus Christ is so infinitely great that none can add to His glory, and therefore He is surpassingly lowly too. We are too proud to seek the conversion of a harlot, but He was not. He went to Samaria to find her and talk to her. We are too great to speak to the babes, but He said, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not.” It is a delightful thought that He should be so great, and yet so lowly, and there is an intimate connection between the two great facts.

Now to close this exposition, let me notice that our blessed Lord proved throughout His life the truth of what He asserted, for when He said, “I am meek and lowly in heart,” He stated what His biography, if it is studied rightly, most fully bears out. When He came to earth His first advent was to a stable, and to a humble woman’s breast. His youth was spent in a carpenter’s shop, and when some gleaming of His superlative wisdom was seen in the temple, yet He went back with His mother and His reputed father, and was subject to them. Throughout His life His associations were with the poor. He never put on soft raiment, or affected the courts of princes. Herod might be anxious to see something of Him, but Christ never went to the palace to flatter Herod, or to amuse his curiosity. He was quite content to be with Peter

and James, and John, humble fishermen as they were. His tenderness towards children was always remarkable. His gentleness towards all who approached Him was most memorable. Whom did He ever spurn? To whom did He ever speak in tones of pride? When was He ever irritated? Did He not bear insults in silence? Did He not answer craftiness with wisdom? Was not mercy His only reply to malice? Even in His death His silence before His enemies was His lowliness, and His prayer for His murderers was His meekness. While “despised and rejected of men,” He was evermore their friend, returning good for all their ill. He was, indeed, “meek and lowly in heart.” Thus I have led you to consider the description given of the heart of Christ.

II. Now, I want your earnest attention while I EXHORT YOU TO CARRY OUT WHAT IS COMMANDED IN THE CONTEXT. There are three commands—“Come unto Me”; “Take My yoke upon you”; “Learn of Me.”

First, I have great pleasure in declaring that all of you who are heavy-laden and are laboring, are invited to *come* to Christ, and you are persuaded to do so because He is meek. I know what you will say. “How can I come to Jesus? I have neglected Him so long; I am now getting on to 70 years of age—can I expect that He will receive me after so long a despising of Him?” “Come unto Me,” He says, “for I am meek of heart; ready to forgive your seventy years’ neglect. However great your transgressions, My love to you shall be greater, still.” Perhaps you add, “But I have most obstinately rejected Christ. Sermons have impressed me, but I have shaken off impression. I have been almost persuaded but I have said, ‘Go Your way this time. When I have a more convenient season I will send for You.’ After I have let the Lord Jesus knock at my door so long without opening to Him, will He still enter? I have refused him a thousand times; will He still come to me?” Yes, He will, for He says—“I am meek in heart, bearing all your misbehavior, kind and loving to the end.” But I think I hear one say—“I have spoken evil against You, O Lord; I have been a doubter of Your divinity; I have had an ill word to say against Your substitution.” All this, also, He will forgive, for He is meek, and He invites all guilty sinners to look into His face, no, to look into His heart and see if they can discover anything like vengeance, anything like implacable wrath. He does not repel even blasphemers! Even to them the Savior does not say, “Depart,” but He invites them to come, and says to them, “Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.” It is true that many of you have sought another savior; you have tried to save yourselves; you have set up your own righteousness in opposition to His righteousness, which is a dire insult to His blessed person. Nevertheless, forsake your pride, poor sinner, and come, for Jesus is ready to forgive you even this. Do you say, “But, ah, even while I think of coming to Him, I feel so unworthy; my very prayers must be offensive to Him. I do not feel my sin as I ought; I have not that tenderness of conscience I ought to have”? Nevertheless, Jesus says, “Come unto Me, for I am meek; I will not judge you with a spirit of censure, nor be harsh towards you. I give liberally and upbraid not. Come as you are; though you are unfit and unworthy, yet still come, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Oh, dear hearers, why do you hesitate? What hardness of heart is this that makes you linger? And if you add, “But I am afraid if I did come to Christ I might sin again in the future; I might again go back and prove unfaithful to Him,” Yet, says Jesus, “I am meek and lowly in heart. I know what you are; I have considered you; I know that your frame is dust, and that your very nature is sinful, yet still I say, come, for I am able to keep you from falling.” “Alas,” you say, “I have a foul leprosy upon me, and my forehead is white with it.” “Come,” says Jesus, “Notwithstanding your pollution, come, even as you are.” Sinner, delay no longer! Trust Jesus now. Do I hear you still objecting? “But I have a great gangrened wound which means death, and at this moment it is offensive to me; how much more loathsome will it be to Him?” Nevertheless, come, for Jesus invites most lovingly. He loves all who come, and loathes none. If you yet cry out, “O, but I am evil, and foul, and vile, none can tell how disgusting I seem to be to myself.” Nevertheless, “Come,” He says, “for I am meek in heart.”

And then to meet another set of objections, which do not so much arise from sinfulness as from a sense of insignificance, Jesus declares, “I am lowly in heart.” “I am,” says one, “very poor.” What does Christ care about riches? What are they to Him? He loves the poorest. The woman of Samaria was quite as welcome to Christ as were those honorable women who ministered unto Him of their substance. “But I am so ignorant.” Did you ever hear of Christ rejecting a disciple because he was ignorant? Did not that

prove how necessary it was that he should become a learner? Does not Jesus receive just such scholars, and teach them wisdom? “Ah, but I am insignificant; nobody will care for me. I am unknown and unobserved.” What does that matter? Christ knows you, and it has pleased Him to choose the things that are not before the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. I know it is a common temptation of Satan to make men and women think, “Well, but there is something about my birth and rank which disqualifies me.” Perhaps the individual was a child of shame, yet the meek and lowly Jesus will not be ashamed of him. It may be there are circumstances about the man’s past life which are too disgraceful to be mentioned, but then Jesus can blot it all out. Jesus cures not the whole, but the sick. And He calls to Himself not the righteous, but sinners. You may think yourself to be, in constitutional tendencies, one of the very worst of mortals, and you may even think it better not to have existed than to be such a wretched thing as you are, but I pray you fear not to come to Jesus, for He is “meek and lowly in heart,” and He rejects no seeking soul. None are beneath Him: His love can descend lower than you have ever fallen—

*“Buried in sorrow and in sin
At hell’s dark door we lay.
But He descends in love divine,
And lifts us into day.”*

If you lie between the jaws of hell, Jesus can pluck you out! It is delightful to my soul to tell these glad tidings to you. The only sorrow I have is the thought that many of you do not take an interest in them. Even now I do not see about you the solemn attention I desire to see, and a trifling noise makes you turn your heads. O sirs, do you despise the heart of Jesus? Has His tender love no beauty in your eyes? Alas, if you knew how near the grave some of you are, and how precious His salvation is to those who possess it, I should have all eyes and ears, and hearts engrossed with such a subject as this. O sinners, sinners, there is never a sweeter word in all Scripture than this, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Nothing should charm you and encourage you more. Jesus, by these lips, speaks to you this morning, and says: “Come unto Me all you that labor and are heavy-laden.” Oh, may His Spirit lead you. Come and trust the Savior! Come and bow at His dear pierced feet! Come and take from His wounded hands the boundless mercies which He delights to give! Come and look into His face, for it beams with love, and accept Him as your Savior now! “If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.” If you accept Him, and bow at His feet, He will save you now, and save you in the day of His coming. This is the first exhortation—an exhortation to sinners to come.

The second is an exhortation to *obey*—“Take My yoke upon you, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Oh, Christian people, this is for you. Obey Christ, for He is no tyrannical master. It is very easy to serve a man who is lowly and meek. It is very difficult, I should think, to be continually employed by a person who is too haughty to speak to you, whose commands are intolerant and who, if you do not fulfill them to the letter, will upbraid you in furious language. It must be hard to be a servant to a hard master. But, O, to serve Jesus is to serve one whose service is perfect freedom, who is ever lenient towards our faults, who forgives as soon as we offend, and if grieved by us, is only grieved because we injure ourselves. “Take My yoke upon you,” He says, “for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Who would not obey Jesus? Who would not wait upon so kind a prince? But I cannot dwell upon that, for time fails me. I need, however, a minute or two upon the third exhortation.

III. “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” I feel this is a lesson which I need to learn, and a lesson which most here present need to learn also, to be “MEEK AND LOWLY IN HEART.” To be meek! We are not all meek, and some of us who may appear to be meek, perhaps owe it rather to a softness of nature than to a sweetness of grace; the true meekness is that which grace gives. Matthew Henry says that there are only three men in the Bible whose faces are said to have shone, Moses, Jesus, and Stephen, and all these were meek men. God will not make angry men’s faces shine; rather do they gather blackness. If anything can put a divine glow on a Christian’s face, it is a readiness to forgive. If you are ready to forgive, you possess one of the sweetest beauties of the Redeemer’s character. It is wonderful the power of meekness, if we would but believe it. There is, after all, no power in anger: “The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God.” Stoop to conquer, submit to overcome. Holy Mr.

Dodd, when reproving a degenerate, was assailed by him in his anger, and two of the good man's teeth were dashed out. When simply wiping the blood from his mouth, the man of God said, "And I will cheerfully allow you to knock out all the rest if you will but mind what I have said, and seek the salvation of your soul." His opponent felt that there was something in the good man which he did not possess, and he was won to a better mind. A woman who had before been a terrible shrew was converted. Her husband persecuted her cruelly for her religion, and one day, in his passion, he struck her on her face so as to knock her to the ground. When she simply rose and said, "But, my husband, if it would do you any good, and bring you to Christ, I would be willing to be struck again." "Woman," he said, "these religious people have made a wonderful change in you, or you would not have spoken so gently, go where you will from now on." Nothing conquers like meekness; not the meekness which is feigned, but real gentleness. Of all things in the world, I think the most foul and sickening is the pretense of forgiving a person when you are the individual who committed the offense. The sanctimonious pretence of meekness when you are justly upbraided is detestable. May God grant us grace to find peace by getting rid of anger, for only by meekness shall you find peace unto your souls. You cannot be at peace while you are harsh and severe, and ready to resent every trifling injury.

The other word is, "lowly in heart." Now this is one of the things every Christian ought to learn of Christ. Augustine was once asked what the most essential thing in religion was. I do not quite agree with his answer, but there was much truth in it. He said, "The first essential thing is humility, the second is humility, and the third is humility." There is more than that essential, but at the same time, in a perfect Christian character, one of the rarest but at the same time one of the most precious pearls is humility. Quaint old Secker says, "The lowliest Christian is the loveliest Christian." A vessel that is empty lifts itself aloft. Go down to the Thames and see how it displays itself. The empty boat rides high exposing itself completely to view. It stands out of the water seeming to say to everybody, "Look at me! What a size I am!" But as soon as that vessel is filled, and has its cargo on board, its bulk sinks out of sight under the stream—it hides a great part of its hull in the water. A full man is a humble man; a proud man is an empty man. Conceit means weakness: lowliness of heart is strength. Jesus Christ, as I have shown, was strong, and yet meek. He was great, and yet lowly. Oh, that we might learn the lesson from Him, and be, "meek and lowly in heart!"

I have thus preached the gospel to the sinner, and bid him come and find rest; I have also preached Christ to the saint, and bid him find a yet further rest in imitating the character of his Lord. May God bless these words according to His own infinite love by His mighty Spirit, and His shall be the praise evermore. Amen and Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—MATTHEW 11.

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